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Mayor and Snow Team: Louisville is ready for snow

Check for updates @LouPubWorks on Twitter during snow events

LOUISVILLE, KY (November 10, 2022) – Mayor Greg Fischer, joined by members of the Metro Snow Team and partners from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Louisville Fire and Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) today outlined preparations for the upcoming 2022-23 snow season.

The Mayor thanked members of the Louisville Metro Snow Team, who have been conducting mock runs on the city's snow routes since early October to prepare new team members for the season.

"It takes a special team to go out and handle significant winter weather, and I and everyone in our city are truly thankful for our team's tireless commitment and service," said the Mayor. "This team will jump into action any hour, any day, to make it safe for the rest of us to get where we need to go when the weather gets bad."

The Snow Team is led by Metro Public Works under the leadership of Director Vanessa Burns and Acting Assistant Director for Roads and Operations Mike Nolan. The Public Works Solid Waste Management Division, Metro Parks, Signs & Markings, the Department of Codes & Regulations' Vacant Lots Division and the Department of Fleet Services are also part of the team.

Louisville will begin the snow season this year with 38,000 tons of salt on hand, which is about average for the beginning of most winters for Louisville Metro. Most of the salt will be stored underground in the Louisville Mega Cavern, while about 17,500 tons are stored at four above-ground locations where the salt will be loaded onto spreading vehicles as needed. In the 2021-22 snow season, Metro snow fighters responded to nine significant wintry weather events, using about 18,000 tons of salt on Metro's snow routes.

The city will continue to pretreat roads with brine ahead of snowfalls when appropriate. Brine is a saltwater solution that reduces the adherence of snow and ice to pavement and reduces slick spots.

City snow routes include arterial and collector roads, bus routes and roads to major employers and emergency facilities for a total of 2,734 two-lane miles. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and private contractors also clear routes in the city.

“I want to thank the Mayor and his administration for the support he has provided during his tenure of not just our snow fighting operations, but all the infrastructure services our department provides,” said Director Burns. “I also want to thank the dedicated and very capable women and men on our Metro Snow Team. They step up every year to ensure our city’s roadways are kept in safe driving condition.”

“During a snow event, our crews cover nearly 600 lane miles of roadway in Jefferson County and work to ensure interstates are clear and safe for travel,” said KYTC District 5 Chief District Engineer Matt Bullock. “Our snow fighters are prepared and ready to respond anytime winter weather impacts our area.”

The Louisville Fire Department praised the crucial role the Metro Snow Team plays as they respond to emergencies.

“Speed is critical when responding to any emergency incident. The work of the Snow Team allows us to arrive on scene safely and quickly to save lives and preserve property during snow events. We couldn’t do it without their support,” said Major Bobby Cooper, Louisville Fire Department.

When it comes to helping residents combat winter fires and indoor home safety, Cooper added, “It’s important for the community to play a key role in keeping their home, families and neighbors safe. Simple safety precautions like maintaining home heating equipment, using space heaters and generators with caution, and replacing batteries in smoke alarms can help ensure a warm and safe winter.”

JCPS students from Wilt, Norton Commons and Cane Run elementary schools painted festive designs on three Metro snow plows that will be featured in the city’s Lots of Lights Parade at Light Up Louisville on Nov. 25, 2022.

“It will be exciting to see the creative work of our students on the plows clearing snow from Louisville streets,” said Dr. Marty Pollio, superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools. “Thank you to Louisville Metro Public Works for giving JCPS students the opportunity to show off their talents and give drivers a smile when they spot these decorated snow plows this winter.”

The Department of Public Works & Assets is responsible for maintaining the city's infrastructure through road construction and maintenance, managing construction projects, transportation planning, snow removal, solid waste collection, and operation and maintenance of all of Metro’s traffic signals. During Mayor Fischer’s tenure, the Department has received tremendous support to ensure the Metro Snow Team and the partner agencies that comprise it

are successful in their snow-fighting efforts to keep Metro roadways in safe driving condition during the season.

For more information about Public Works, visit <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/public-works>, like on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LouPubWorks>, and follow on Twitter @LouPubWorks.

The city's snow removal progress can be followed via an interactive online map. During snow events, a snow map will be posted on the city website, www.louisvilleky.gov